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Report of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators

Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2018/227 and past practices, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the report of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators on the ongoing work for the implementation of the global indicator framework for the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In its report, the Expert Group describes the activities undertaken in 2018 pursuant to Statistical Commission decision 49/101, including: (a) tier classification updates and the methodological development of tier III indicators; (b) criteria for the implementation of the guidelines on data flows and global data reporting for the Sustainable Development Goals and best practices; (c) possible proxy indicators for some of the tier III indicators to be used for immediate monitoring; (d) activities within the work stream on data disaggregation and the three working groups on interlinkages, Statistical Data and Metadata eXchange (SDMX) and geospatial information, respectively; and (e) annual refinements of the indicators and plan for the 2020 comprehensive review. The Commission will also have before it background documents on: best practices on data flows and global data reporting for Sustainable Development Goals, prepared jointly by the Expert Group and the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities; data disaggregation for the Sustainable Development Goal indicators; and interlinkages in the global Sustainable Development Goal indicator framework.

The Statistical Commission is invited to comment on progress made by the Expert Group and the direction of future work. The points for discussion by the Commission are set out in paragraph 33 of the present report.

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I. Introduction

1. As mandated in General Assembly resolution 70/1, the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators was tasked with the development and implementation of the global indicator framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Expert Group developed a global indicator framework, which was adopted by the General Assembly at its seventy-first session, on 6 July 2017, in resolution 71/313 on the work of the Statistical Commission pertaining to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

2. The present report describes the work carried out by the Expert Group from March 2018 to December 2018 for the implementation of the global indicator framework, on the basis of the work programme agreed by the Commission and in accordance with Statistical Commission decision 49/101.

II. Implementation of the global indicator framework

3. In 2018, the Group held two physical meetings, each attended by 150–200 representatives from member countries, observer countries, international and regional organizations, civil society, academia and the private sector. Between meetings, the Group also continued to interact electronically and through teleconferences between meetings.

4. The seventh meeting, hosted by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, was held in Vienna from 9 to 12 April 2018. The eighth meeting, hosted by Statistics Sweden and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, was held in Stockholm from 5 to 8 November 2018. At those two meetings, the Group discussed progress made on the methodological development of tier III indicators, and reviewed and updated the tier classification; reviewed annual refinements for a few selected indicators; discussed the proposed criteria for the implementation of the guidelines on data flows and global data reporting for the Sustainable Development Goals and shared best practices; discussed data disaggregation required for the indicators; discussed possibly proxy indicators for tier III indicators; discussed guiding principles for the 2020 comprehensive review; reviewed the work of the three working groups; and shared experiences on Sustainable Development Goal implementation and reporting at the national, regional, global and thematic levels. In addition, several WebEx meetings were held over the course of the year to advance the work on tier reclassification.

A. Tier classification updates and the methodological development of tier III indicators

5. In accordance with the mechanism for updating the classification of the indicators, the Expert Group reviewed the tier classification of the indicators at its seventh and eighth meetings and at several virtual meetings held throughout the year. The Group focused on tier III indicators for which sufficient advancements in methodological development had been achieved, and all tier I and II indicators based on data availability at the global and regional levels.

6. Significant progress has been made in the methodological development of many tier III indicators. As a result, the Expert Group considered many requests for the tier reclassification of tier III indicators. In advance of the meetings of the Group, agencies were invited to provide supporting documents for the reclassification of tier III indicators at least one month before the meeting. At the seventh meeting of the Group, six tier III indicators were reviewed and reclassified as tier II. At the eighth

meeting of the Group, an additional 14 tier III indicators or subindicators were reviewed for reclassification and were reclassified as tier II. The Group also reviewed and reclassified five additional tier III indicators at two virtual meetings in September 2018. The Group provided feedback to custodian agencies on those indicators that could not be reclassified, indicating the specific methodological work that would need to be conducted before reclassification could be reconsidered.

7. Given the urgency of reclassifying the remaining tier III indicators, the Expert Group will review additional tier reclassification requests at virtual meetings from December 2018 to February 2019 and will continue to review the reclassification requests at its two physical meetings in 2019 and at virtual meetings throughout the year. An update on the reclassification of tier III indicators will be provided orally at the introduction of the present report to the Commission. Custodian agencies are required to submit all the required documentation for the reclassification requests at least one month in advance of the meetings so that the members of the Group have sufficient time to review all documents.

8. In accordance with the approved work programme of the Expert Group, a review of the availability of data for tier I and II indicators was conducted. The data availability of all tier I and II indicators in the global indicator database as at 31 August 2018 was reviewed to assess country and population coverage for each region where those indicators were relevant. The assessment concluded that two tier I indicators did not have sufficient data coverage, and should therefore be moved to tier II, and that eight tier II indicators met the criteria to be moved to tier I.

9. In accordance with its work programme (see E/CN.3/2017/2, para. 35 (a)), the Expert Group continued the review of workplans for tier III indicators and requested all custodian agencies to submit revised workplans with detailed timelines for the completion of methodological work and the commencement of data collection activities. Updated workplans were received for almost all tier III indicators and are available at https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/tierIII-indicators/. Throughout the year, the Group conducted a thorough review of tier III workplans, flagging any issues in the current methodological work, in particular for those referring to targets with a 2020 deadline. Workplans are still missing for a few indicators that remain without a custodian agency. If an indicator remains without a custodian agency, the Group has indicated that it may be refined or removed at the comprehensive review in 2020.

10. According to the updates to the tier classification following the reviews, as at 6 December 2018, out of the 232 indicators, 101 are tier I indicators, 81 are tier II, 44 are tier III and 6 are multiple tiers (i.e., different components of the indicator are classified into different tiers). The Group expressed concern that more than 50 per cent of indicators for Sustainable Development Goals 12 and 13 are tier III indicators (the development of the tier III indicators for Goal 13 is on hold pending the conclusion of the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in December 2018). The methodological progress for the remaining tier III indicators is quite advanced and it is expected that, by March 2019, methodological work will be completed for more than half of the remaining tier III, leaving only about 20 tier III indicators. Almost half of those 20 tier III indicators are orphan indicators or indicators where the methodological development has stalled. The Expert Group has worked to identify proxies for some of those indicators and will review the indicators in detail during 2019 and possibly propose replacements and/or refined indicators as part of the 2020 comprehensive review. The Secretariat will continue to update the tier classification information soon after the reclassification review takes place, and the latest information can be found at https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/iaeg-sdgs/tier-classification/.

B. Criteria for the implementation of the guidelines on data flows and global data reporting for the Sustainable Development Goals and best practices

11. In accordance with Statistical Commission decision 49/101 (g), the Expert Group was tasked to work jointly with custodian agencies and establish a fruitful dialogue between all parties, to further refine the guidelines by taking into account concerns raised at the forty-ninth session of the Commission and to prepare criteria for implementation of the guidelines that are based on best practices and on ways to limit the burden that the envisaged procedures may represent in terms of time and resources for both national and international statistical systems and that resolve outstanding issues. As agreed by the Commission at its forty-ninth session, seven members of the Group and four members of the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities worked to develop a document on criteria for the implementation of the guidelines on data flows and global data reporting for the Sustainable Development Goals, with the aim of implementing the guidelines prepared by the Group.[1] The co-chairs of both the Group and the Committee led the process of developing the document. It was reviewed by both the Group and the Committee and presented at the eighth meeting of the Group. The document is contained in annex I of the present report.

12. The Expert Group is also developing a report on best practices on data flows and global data reporting. An initial draft will be finalized by mid-February and will be available to the Commission as a background document. It will be a living document, to be updated as new best practices are identified. The best practices presented in the document were taken from several key inputs provided to the Group, including: (a) a series of case studies conducted by the Group in 2017 on data flows and data reporting from the national to regional and international levels, for seven representative global indicators; (b) data flow pilot studies prepared under the auspices of the Conference of European Statisticians steering group on statistics for the Sustainable Development Goals; (c) a series of case studies on best practices for data flows conducted in five African countries by Botswana, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana and the United Republic of Tanzania. The results from the studies were shared with the Group at its eighth meeting, and key results from them will be incorporated into the background document.

13. In addition, the Secretariat has continued to update the data collection calendars, the list of focal points for Sustainable Development Goal indicators in custodian agencies and the list of Sustainable Development Goal data contact persons in national statistical offices. The former two are available at https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/. The latter is shared by the Secretariat directly with custodian agencies to ensure that national statistical offices are kept informed, via email, when custodian agencies are collecting, processing and disseminating data for Sustainable Development Goal indicators.

C. Existing indicators as proxies for immediate use to monitor targets

14. The Statistical Commission, in its decision 49/101 (d), requested the Inter-Agency and Expert Group to consider the feasibility of using tentative existing indicators as proxies for immediate use to monitor targets while tier III indicators are being finalized. The Expert Group began that work by identifying priority targets and goals where proxies were most needed. Those included targets with a 2020 deadline,

[1] Available at https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/49th-session/documents/BG-Item-3a-IAEG-SDGs-DataFlowsGuidelines-E.pdf.

all means of implementation targets, and Goals 12–14 because of the number of tier III indicators that currently exist to monitor those Goals. The group then reviewed indicator proposals for the targets and identified an initial list of proxies. The initial list was shared with members of the Group, and subsequently with custodian agencies, to gauge interest in the proxies and to determine whether any of the proposed proxy indicators had an agreed methodology and available data.

15. As a result of those consultations and the discussion that took place at the eighth meeting, the Expert Group developed an initial list of global proxies to monitor indicators that are currently tier III, which are available at the website of the Expert Group at https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/iaeg-sdgs/.

III. Work stream on data disaggregation

16. The Statistical Commission, in its decision 49/101 (e), requested the Inter-Agency and Expert Group to clearly determine the dimensions and categories of data disaggregation required for the indicators in the framework, keeping in mind the resources needed and the key principle of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of no one left behind. Throughout 2018, the Expert Group continued its work on identifying the dimensions and categories of data disaggregation for the global Sustainable Development Goal indicators on the basis of the minimum disaggregation requirements in the 2030 Agenda and taking into consideration the available data. The Expert Group has also worked on the compilation of existing standards and tools for data disaggregation that can be used as a reference for future work.

17. On 9 November 2018, a one-day working meeting with members of the Expert Group, custodian agencies and other stakeholders was held to discuss issues related to data disaggregation and the preparation of a background document to be submitted to the fiftieth session of the Statistical Commission. At the meeting, it was agreed that the Group would consult with specialized groups on policy priorities concerning their respective populations (including, for instance, people with disability, migrants, refugees and older people) and reach out to custodian agencies on the disaggregation dimensions and categories for Sustainable Development Goal global indicators where relevant. It was further agreed that an initial proposal would be developed by the Group and then be put forward in an open consultation before the document is submitted to the Commission as a background document in February 2019.

IV. Working groups of the Expert Group

18. Three working groups were established by the Expert Group in March 2016, focusing on the following topics: statistical data and metadata exchange, geospatial information and interlinkages. Each working group is composed of members of the Group and other invited representatives, as determined by their respective terms of reference.[2] A brief summary of the work of each group in 2018 and descriptions of future meetings and work is provided below.

A. Working group on statistical data and metadata exchange

19. The working group on statistical data and metadata exchange (SDMX) consists of 12 country members and 10 international agency members and is chaired by

[2] The terms of reference, membership and other important information of each working group can be found at http://unstats.un.org/sdgs/iaeg-sdgs/.

Colombia. The working group released the first pilot data structure definition in February 2018 and undertook a pilot Sustainable Development Goal data exchange between countries and custodian agencies from March to September 2018. To facilitate the pilot data exchange, the United Nations Statistics Division also built a prototype data exchange web site, SDG Data Labs.

20. In addition to monthly teleconferences, the group held its third meeting in October 2018, at which it reviewed the pilot data exchange and took note of lessons learned. In the first half of 2019, the working group plans to finalize and release the first official Sustainable Development Goal-data structure definition; develop a data structure definition maintenance schedule; set up a production data exchange; and release draft metadata structure definitions. In the second half of 2019, the group plans to develop guidelines on using and customizing the Sustainable Development Goal-data structure definition for national use and participation in the data exchange; build national capacity; pilot metadata exchange; and conduct outreach to countries and custodian agencies beyond the working group.

B. Working group on geospatial information

21. The working group on geospatial information currently consists of 17 country members and 6 international agency members (see the working group website at http://ggim.un.org/UNGGIM-wg6/). The group, co-chaired by Mexico and Sweden, held its fifth meeting in Nairobi from 5 to 8 December 2018. The group also presented a report to the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management on geospatial information for sustainable development.

22. The working group has two task streams, both with a proposed timeline of 2018–2019. The first task stream focuses on the disaggregation of statistical data by geographic location and aggregation of geocoded unit-level data. The group plans to compile best practices on disaggregation by geographic location and aggregation of geocoded unit level data and prepare technical guidance on concepts and methodologies for data disaggregation by geographic location. The second task stream focuses on the availability and application of production-ready satellite earth observation data for the production of indicators. The group will compile best practices and case studies at the national level and prepare technical guidance on concepts and methodologies for the integration of satellite earth observation data into the production of indicators.

23. At the eighth meeting, the Expert Group expressed the concern that the Group was not sufficiently connected to the work of the working group and that there must be an increase in interaction with the statistical community. The recommendation to include a few of the members of the Group (the same representatives as those in the working group) was welcomed and accepted by the working group.

C. Working group on interlinkages

24. The working group on interlinkages currently consists of 11 country members and 8 representatives from academia, international and regional organizations and civil society organizations. The group is co-chaired by Canada and China and conducts most of its meetings via WebEx and through e-mail.

25. The working group has prepared a background document that will be submitted in early February 2019 to the fiftieth session of the Statistical Commission. The background document incorporates early interlinkages work undertaken by the group, results of the global and internal consultations, best practices from countries and

organizations and an initial integrated analysis of the economic, social and environmental developments to support policy. During 2019, the group plans to work on a second report that looks at the interlinkages between the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting and the Sustainable Development Goals, while also examining the interlinkages between policy and legislation and a deeper examination of the integrated analysis in support of effective policymaking.

V. Annual refinements and plan for the 2020 comprehensive review

26. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 71/313 and the plan and criteria agreed by the Expert Group with respect to possible annual minor refinements,[3] the Group reviewed the list of indicators proposed by its members for possible refinements. At its eighth meeting, the Group reviewed six refinements (see annex II).

27. Also at the eighth meeting, the Expert Group agreed on general guiding principles, criteria and a timeline for the 2020 comprehensive review. The 2020 comprehensive review is an opportunity to improve the indicator framework to help the global monitoring of the 2030 agenda and to provide the necessary guidance to countries, many of which are already well advanced in implementing their national framework and reporting platforms. The Expert Group agreed on several guiding principles for the review in order to set the parameters within which the review would take place. The principles include the following: the review needs to take into account investments already made at the national and international levels and should not undermine ongoing efforts; the revised framework should not significantly impose an additional burden on national statistical work; there should be space for improvements, while at the same time ensuring that the changes are limited in scope and the size of the framework remains the same; the focus of the Group's common work should remain on the implementation of the framework in countries for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

28. In addition to those more general guiding principles, the group agreed that the 2020 comprehensive review would consider the global indicator framework and would include the replacement, deletion, refinement or adjustment of some indicators and, in a few select cases, additional indicators only when: (a) the current indicator(s) did not map well to the target or track the target well; (b) an additional indicator was needed to cover a critical aspect of the target or goal; and/or (c) the methodological development of a tier III indicator had stalled or not produced the expected results.

29. The specific criteria for the implementation of the review are as follows:

(a) An additional indicator may be considered only in exceptional cases when a crucial aspect of a target is not being monitored by the current indicator(s) or to address a critical or emerging new issue that is not monitored by the existing indicators, or when a whole Goal has very few tier I or tier II indicators for the follow-up;

(b) A deletion will be considered when the methodological work of a tier III indicator has stalled or has not produced the expected results, and a replacement will be proposed if the deleted indicator is the only indicator monitoring the corresponding target;

[3] See E/CN.3/2017/2, para. 21.

(c) Adjustments or replacements will be considered when the indicator does not map well to the target or does not track the target well;

(d) The proposed indicator must have an agreed methodology and available data (tier III indicator proposals will not be considered) and be suitable for global monitoring;

(e) The aim of the review will be to maintain the same number of indicators currently in the framework in order not to alter significantly the original framework, which is already being implemented in most countries and not to increase the reporting burden on national statistical systems.

30. The proposed timeline for the comprehensive review is as follows: (a) by March 2019 the Group will prepare a review framework containing possible deletions, replacements, adjustments and additions, based on previous analysis and assessments, with assistance from the Secretariat; (b) at its ninth meeting, in March 2019, the Group will conduct a final progress review of tier III indicators to determine whether they can be maintained in the list or deleted; (c) between May and July 2019, an open consultation will be held on the preliminary list of possible deletions, adjustments, replacements and additions, and by September 2019 the Group will review the results of the consultations; (d) by the end of November 2019 the Group will prepare the final proposal for the 2020 review and submit it to the Commission for its consideration at the fifty-first session in March 2020.

VI. Work programme of the Expert Group

31. It is suggested that the Expert Group carry out the following activities between March 2019 and March 2020:

(a) Continue the review of workplans for tier III indicators and reclassify indicators when requirements are met, at the physical meetings and via open WebEx meetings, in accordance with the calendar agreed by the group;

(b) Carry out the comprehensive review on replacement, deletion, refinement or adjustment of indicators and, in a few selected cases, additional indicators, and prepare proposals for consideration by the Statistical Commission at its fifty-first session in 2020;

(c) Continue the work stream on data disaggregation in order to provide further guidelines and liaise with the other working groups (i.e., SDMX, geospatial information) for the data disaggregation work;

(d) Continue the work of the three working groups, on statistical data and metadata exchange (SDMX), geospatial information and interlinkages and review the workplans of the working groups to ensure that they are in line with the work of the Expert Group;

(e) Continue to identify best practices for the data flows between countries and custodian agencies to be shared on the website of the Expert Group and

(f) Hold two meetings, the first in the first quarter of 2019 and the second in the fourth quarter of 2019, on dates to be determined, and continue to interact electronically and through teleconferences, as needed.

32. There will also be a rotation of members of the Expert Group that will take place in May 2019 in accordance with the terms of reference of the Group.[4] The rotation will be led by the respective regional mechanisms.

VII. Points for discussion

33. **The Statistical Commission is invited to:**

(a) **Take note of the work conducted by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators in response to the decisions of the Commission;**

(b) **Express its views and adopt the criteria for the implementation of the guidelines on data flows and global data reporting for the Sustainable Development Goals as contained in annex I;**

(c) **Express its views and adopt the six annual refinements in the global indicator framework as contained in annex II;**

(d) **Express its views on the guiding principles and criteria for the 2020 comprehensive review;**

(e) **Express its views on the background documents on data disaggregation and interlinkages;**

(f) **Express its views and adopt the proposed work programme of the Expert Group for 2019.**

[4] https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/IAEG-SDGs%20Terms%20of%20Reference_2017.pdf.

Annex I

Criteria for the implementation of the guidelines on data flows and global data reporting for the Sustainable Development Goals

Commissioned by the United Nations Statistical Commission, the present paper focuses on statistical data flows for global reporting on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, while it is recognized that non-statistical indicators are also necessary to monitor such progress. The non-statistical indicators in the global framework are not within the competence of national statistical offices as data providers and validators, although national statistical offices may still act as national administrative coordinators of Sustainable Development Goal reporting as a whole, including for non-statistical indicators. To delineate clearly the scope of the following guidelines, it will therefore be necessary to establish a list of non-statistical global Sustainable Development Goal indicators.

Background

In its resolution 71/313 on the work of the Statistical Commission pertaining to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the General Assembly stated on 6 July 2017 that it:

(a) Adopted the global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, developed by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators, as a voluntary and country-led instrument, that will be complemented by indicators at the regional and national levels, which will be developed by Member States;

(b) Stressed that official statistics and data from national statistical systems constitute the basis needed for the global indicator framework, recommended that national statistical systems explore ways to integrate new data sources into their systems to satisfy new data needs of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as appropriate, and also stressed the role of national statistical offices as the coordinator of the national statistical system;

(c) Requested the Secretary-General to continue to facilitate collaboration between national statistical systems and the relevant international and regional organizations to enhance data reporting channels and ensure the harmonization and consistency of data and statistics for the indicators used to follow up and review the Sustainable Development Goals and targets, within existing resources;

(d) Stressed that all activities of the global statistical system must be conducted in full adherence to the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/6.

At its forty-ninth session in March 2018, the United Nations Statistical Commission (see E/2018/24) welcomed efforts by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group to improve data flows and global reporting, and also welcomed the draft guidelines on data flows and global data reporting for the Sustainable Development Goals as an initial step to improve coordination and harmonization of national and international data systems and to ensure full transparency of data, metadata and data aggregates presented in the Global Sustainable Development Goal Indicators Database; and requested the Inter-Agency and Expert Group to work jointly with custodian agencies and establish a fruitful dialogue between all parties, to further refine the guidelines by taking into account concerns raised at the forty-ninth session of the Commission and to prepare criteria for implementation of the guidelines based on best practices and on ways to limit the burden that the envisaged procedures may represent in terms

of time and resources for both national and international statistical systems and that resolve outstanding issues.

The present document is hence intended to establish criteria for the implementation of the guidelines on data flows and global data reporting for the Sustainable Development Goals prepared by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goals Indicators. However, it should be clear that it is a living document and further additions will be made as new best practices emerge.

I. Overarching objective: statistical indicators for the monitoring of Sustainable Development Goals should meet the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics

All activities of the global statistical system must be conducted in full adherence to the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/6 and, in the case of international and supranational statistical agencies, also the principles governing international statistical activities. In particular, Member States and international and supranational statistical agencies should:

(a) Utilize only concepts, definitions, classifications, sources, methods and procedures that meet professional and scientific standards;

(b) Document fully and make available data sources and estimation or adjustment methods, in a manner that ensures the transparency of the methodology and the replicability and trust of the estimates;

II. Commitment of international and supranational statistical agencies

As custodian agencies, international and supranational statistical agencies have accountability for the quality and accuracy of global reporting on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. In order to maximize quality, transparency and trust in the global reporting and adherence to the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and principles governing international statistical activities, custodian agencies should:

1. Base the compilation of the international series for Sustainable Development Goal indicators on national official data sources in all cases where national statistical systems produce and release data or national estimates that are consistent with agreed indicator definitions and agreed international statistical standards.

2. Consult with national statistical systems in identifying the most appropriate statistical methods and data sources, exclusively based on professional, scientific and statistically robust considerations and internationally agreed statistical standards. National statistical offices will be notified on those consultations.

3. Provide an opportunity, within a reasonable time frame, for national statistical authorities to review country-specific data and estimates of Sustainable Development Goal indicators prior to their release.

4. Ensure that data sources and methods are thoroughly documented and fully transparent to the public and in particular to national data providers in order to facilitate validation and the replicability of the data.

5. Adequately explain possible discrepancies between national and international data.

6. Provide complete and detailed metadata and methodological guidance in a timely manner to national statistical systems and indicate changes made to these.

7. Provide technical assistance to Member States, through their national statistical offices, if requested, to improve the national reporting on Sustainable Development Goal indicators and the application of agreed international standards.

8. Ensure ongoing dialogue with Member States on the national data reported for global monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular when there are disagreements with regard to national data sources and country-specific estimates. Dialogue should focus on maximizing scientific rigour, international comparability, coherence and the implementation of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics.

9. Minimize the data reporting burden of national statistical systems by utilizing existing reporting mechanisms or national reporting platforms for Sustainable Development Goal indicators whenever possible, promoting the use of appropriate data transmission standards and tools, such as Statistical Data and Metadata eXchange (SDMX) and web application program interfaces.

10. Coordinate the data collection work of international and supranational statistical agencies and establish effective and efficient data sharing arrangements among them to avoid duplication of efforts.

11. In order to enhance the coordinating role of the national statistical office within the national statistical system and ensure the quality of country-specific data, international and supranational statistical agencies will copy the national statistical office in their data requests in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals and provide the national statistical office with a list of all national data providers and the data collection calendar.

12. International and supranational statistical agencies will only address data requests to countries regarding a specific Sustainable Development Goal indicator if they are the designated custodian agency. In cases where more than one such agency is designated as custodian agency, data shall be collected through common means, such as joint questionnaires.

13. Data collected by the custodian agencies shall be released publicly and shared, in a timely manner and at no cost, with the Statistics Division and other international and supranational statistical agencies that may be interested in the data for other reasons, such as for thematic reporting.

14. Estimates of Sustainable Development Goal indicators published in databases maintained by international and supranational statistical agencies shall be properly documented and sourced, with the provision of clear and comprehensive metadata.

15. Maximize data availability by supporting open data access and public sharing of data pertaining to Sustainable Development Goal indicators, by both international and supranational statistical agencies, and national statistical offices and national statistical systems.

16. Support developing countries, in particular African countries, least developed countries, small island developing States and landlocked developing countries, in strengthening the capacity of national statistical offices and data systems.

III. Member States' commitment

Member States have the primary responsibility for follow-up and review, at the national, regional and global levels, in relation to the progress made in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and targets. National statistical systems are the primary source of data and statistics for Sustainable Development Goal global reporting, and the quality of the data and statistics they report to international and supranational statistical agencies has a major impact on the overall quality of global reporting on Sustainable Development Goal indicators. In order to maximize accuracy, transparency and trust in global reporting on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, Member States should:

17. Produce the underlying data for global Sustainable Development Goal indicators based on internationally agreed definitions and standards.

18. Provide necessary data and metadata for global reporting to custodian agencies in a timely manner and according to quality standards through existing reporting mechanisms or national Sustainable Development Goal indicator reporting platforms whenever possible.

19. When data do not meet international standards, submit the necessary methodological information to allow international and supranational statistical agencies to adjust statistics to ensure international coherence and comparability.

20. Review the information provided by custodian agencies and notify agencies if any issues are identified.

21. Ensure ongoing dialogue with custodian agencies on national data reported for global monitoring of Sustainable Development Goals, in particular when there are disagreements related to national data sources and country-specific estimates. Dialogue should focus on maximizing scientific rigour, international comparability, coherence and the implementation of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics.

22. Pursue support for strengthening data collection and capacity-building in their own countries.

IV. Role of the national statistical office

In their capacity as data producers and as coordinators of their national statistical systems, national statistical offices have accountability for the quality and accuracy of global reporting on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. Within a country, the national statistical office is often mandated also to provide quality assurance for the statistical data produced by other national data-producing entities, although some national statistics may remain under the supervision of specialized institutions. Arrangements for data reporting from national statistical systems to international and supranational statistical agencies vary considerably across agencies and countries. National statistical offices are the national data providers for many international and supranational statistical agencies. Depending on the governance structure of each such agency, Member States may have designated other authorities, typically in line ministries, as providers of national data. In such cases, internal coordination within the national statistical system is of utmost importance.

While respecting the existence of different data reporting arrangements among international and supranational statistical agencies, national statistical offices and other actors in the national statistical system, Member States and custodian agencies

should promote the coordinating role of national statistical offices in reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals by:

23. Keeping national statistical offices systematically informed on data collection and validation processes related to Sustainable Development Goal indicators even when custodian agencies' primary contact is in other institutions.

24. Strengthening national statistical offices' capacity to coordinate the production of Sustainable Development Goal indicators within the national statistical system and apply a coherent quality framework.

25. Supporting national statistical offices to become the national overall coordinator for the Sustainable Development Goal indicators.

26. Supporting national statistical offices on the dissemination and advocacy of the data and statistical information collected for Sustainable Development Goals.

Annex II

Annual refinements to be made to the global indicator framework

Goals and targets (from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development)	*Refinement of indicator*
Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries	
10.7.1 Recruitment cost borne by employee as a proportion of yearly income earned in country of destination	10.7.1 Recruitment cost borne by employee as a proportion of monthly income earned in country of destination
10.7.2 Number of countries that have implemented well-managed migration policies	10.7.2 Number of countries with migration policies that facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people
Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	
12.3.1 Global food loss index	12.3.1 (a) Food loss index and (b) food waste index
Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development	
14.6.1 Progress by countries in the degree of implementation of international instruments aiming to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing	14.6.1 Degree of implementation of international instruments aiming to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing
14.b.1 Progress by countries in the degree of application of a legal/regulatory/policy/institutional framework which recognizes and protects access rights for small-scale fisheries	14.b.1 Degree of application of a legal/regulatory/policy/institutional framework which recognizes and protects access rights for small-scale fisheries
Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	
16.7.1 Proportions of positions (by sex, age, persons with disabilities and population groups) in public institutions (national and local legislatures, public service, and judiciary) compared to national distributions	16.7.1 Proportions of positions in national and local institutions, including (a) the legislatures; (b) the public service; and (c) the judiciary, compared to national distributions, by sex, age, persons with disabilities and population groups